

The Woman Attorney on her Circuit.

[Correspondence of the Baltimore Sun.]

WASHINGTON, Oct. 25, 1878.

Mrs. Belva A. Lockwood, the female attorney of this city, who was refused admittance to the bar of the Circuit Court of Prince George's county, Md., last week, by Judge Magruder, as stated in The Sun, returned here from Port Tobacco, Charles county, a few days ago. She went to Port Tobacco to file some papers in a case in which she is retained as the attorney for the plaintiffs in the settlement of an administrator's account. She called upon Mr. J. B. Mattingly, the clerk of the court there, and upon stating her business was allowed to file the papers. She expects to have to return there soon to argue the case before the Orphans' Court, but does not know whether or not she will be allowed to do so. She said she was treated very courteously by the clerk of the court, who promised her he would call the attention of the judges of the court to the case at their meeting on to-day, and inform her what action the court will take in it. She says she has no desire to be quarreling with courts, and if allowed will practice her profession quietly. She says she had no idea that her appearance at Marlboro' would create so much talk, but it was not her desire that it should, and that had it not been for Judge Magruder the world at large would have never known that she had a case before him. She says she has not got the time now to fight with judges, and that unless they begin the row she will be as meek as it is possible for a human being to be, but that when the great question of the bounds of women is raised of course she will have something to say. She says she has repeatedly in the past six years declined to take cases in Maryland and Virginia because she did not have the time to carry on the necessary contest that she knew was bound to follow before the question of the right of females to practice law before the courts there would be settled. She will go to Baltimore soon to argue an important court case now on the calendar in the Federal Court there, and says she has no doubt but that she will have easy sailing, and that the United States judge will not prevent her from earning her fee the same as if she were a man. The Thomas case at Marlboro', she says, she will conduct until she wins it, though her name will not appear in the record anywhere as the attorney.—She will, however, as soon as answer is made to the papers she filed there last week, prepare the necessary replication, which will be filed the same as the other papers, in the name of Mr. Chew, a leading lawyer there, as attorney. She says she will take the fee just as regularly as if her own name were allowed to be signed to the papers, and that the fee is the most interesting thing in connection with the case, now that the court has put itself on record as twenty-five years behind the times. Mrs. Lockwood is a widow and has gray hair. Her husband, who practiced dentistry here for many years, died several years since. She says she has done all a woman could do, and has properly raised and educated her family. Her daughter is grown, having about four years since graduated with distinguished honors from one of the leading colleges in the country. She is the correspondent for several Western papers. Mrs. Lockwood thinks that the proper sphere for a woman is anything that is respectable and honest; that as her daughter has arrived at that age when she is supposed to be able to take care of herself, there is nothing unwomanly in her practicing law or any other profession. "There is only one place open to women," she says, "if they have no family or husband to support, and that is teaching school. I have done that for years, but am too old to go at it again. Besides it is not my choice, and as every one who has tried it knows, it pays but little and is very hard work. Now by practicing law I can clear, and have cleared, from \$8,000 to \$5,000 per year. Will any sensible person tell me, being as there are no home demands on me, that it is not my sphere to practice law if I choose to do so?" Mrs. Lockwood has a young man with her as a law student from Fairfax Court House, Va. She has also as partners in the claim and collection business Mrs. Lavina C. Dundore and Mrs. Marrilla M. Kicker. They live together and do a large pension and claim business. They are known in the departments and around the courts as "the three graces." Mrs. Kicker, who is the youngest and handsomest, says they are all widows, but are pledged never to marry again until all the legal disabilities of women are removed. When that arrives she says "we will all be open for offers, but we don't intend to take any men into the firm unless they will work as hard as we do and support themselves. We don't and will not have any drones around us."